

Food and agricultural sciences means basic, applied, and developmental research, extension, and teaching activities in the food, agricultural, renewable natural resources, forestry, and physical and social sciences in the broadest sense of these terms including but not limited to research, extension and teaching activities concerned with the production, processing, marketing, distribution, conservation, consumption, research, and development of food and agriculturally related products and services, inclusive of programs in agriculture, natural resources, aquaculture, forestry, veterinary medicine, home economics, rural development, and closely allied fields.

Graduate degree means a master's or doctoral degree.

State means any one of the fifty States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, the Virgin Islands of the United States, and the District of Columbia.

Teaching activities means formal classroom instruction, laboratory instruction, and practicum experience specific to the food and agricultural sciences and matters relating thereto conducted by colleges and universities offering baccalaureate or higher degrees.

§ 3402.3 Institutional eligibility.

Applications may be submitted by land-grant colleges and universities, by colleges and universities having significant minority enrollments and a demonstrable capacity to carry out the teaching of food and agricultural sciences, and by other colleges and universities having a demonstrable capacity to carry out the teaching of food and agricultural sciences. All applicants must be institutions that confer a graduate degree in at least one area of the food and agricultural sciences targeted for National Needs Fellowships, that have a significant on-going commitment to the food and agricultural sciences generally, and that have a significant ongoing commitment to the specific subject area for which a grant application is made. It is the ob-

jective to award grants to colleges and universities which have notable teaching and research competencies in the food and agricultural sciences. The Graduate Fellowships are specifically intended to support programs that encourage outstanding students to pursue and complete a graduate degree at such institutions in an area of the food and agricultural sciences for which there is a national need for the development of scientific and professional expertise. The postdoctoral Fellowships are designed to support academic programs that provide additional training and mentoring to USDA Graduate Fellows and have notable teaching and research competencies in the NIFA designated national need areas. Institutions which currently have excellent programs of graduate study and training in the food and agricultural sciences dealing with targeted national needs are particularly encouraged to apply for all National Needs Fellowships.

Subpart B—Program Description

§ 3402.4 Food and agricultural sciences areas targeted for National Needs Graduate and Postdoctoral Fellowship Grants Program support.

Areas of the food and agricultural sciences, including multidisciplinary studies, appropriate for Fellowship grant applications are those in which developing shortages of expertise have been determined and targeted by HEP for National Needs Graduate and Postdoctoral Fellowship Grants Program support. When funds are available and HEP determines that a new competition is warranted, the specific areas and funds per area will be identified in a funding opportunity announcement announcing the program and soliciting program applications.

§ 3402.5 Overview of National Needs Graduate and Postdoctoral Fellowship Grants Program.

(a) The program will provide funds for a limited number of grants to support graduate student stipends and cost-of-education institutional allowances. These grants will be awarded competitively to eligible institutions. In order to encourage the development of special activities that are expected

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to contribute to Fellows' advanced degree objectives, the program will also provide competitive, special international study or thesis/dissertation research travel allowances for a limited number of USDA Graduate Fellows. To encourage academic institutions to provide additional training/mentoring to outstanding USDA Graduate Fellows who have completed their doctoral degrees, the program will also provide postdoctoral Fellowship grants to a limited number of USDA Graduate Fellows.

(b) Based on the amount of funds appropriated in any fiscal year, HEP will determine:

(1) Whether new competitions for graduate Fellowships, postdoctoral Fellowships, and/or special international study or thesis/dissertation research travel allowances will be held during that fiscal year;

(2) The degree level(s) to be supported—master's, doctoral and/or postdoctoral;

(3) The proportion of appropriations to be targeted for Fellowship stipends for each respective degree level supported;

(4) The proportion of appropriations to be targeted for the cost-of-education institutional allowances for each respective degree level supported;

(5) The proportion of appropriations to be targeted for the special international study or thesis/dissertation research travel allowances for each respective degree level supported;

(6) The allowable stipend amount for each respective degree level supported, the cost-of-education institutional allowance for each respective degree level supported, and the maximum funds available for each special international study or thesis/dissertation research travel allowance for each respective degree level supported;

(7) The activities for which the cost-of-education allowance may be used for awards made in that year; and

(8) The maximum total funds that may be awarded to an institution under the program in a given fiscal year.

(c) HEP will also determine:

(1) The maximum number of national needs areas for which funding may be requested in a single application;

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(2) The degree levels for which funding may be requested in a single application;

(3) The minimum and maximum number of fellowships for which an institution may apply in a single application; and

(4) The limits on the total number of applications that can be submitted by an institution, college, school, or other administrative unit.

(d) These determinations will be published as a part of the solicitation, which will be available at <http://www.grants.gov>.

§ 3402.6 Overview of the special international study and/or thesis/dissertation research travel allowance.

(a) For each USDA Graduate Fellow who desires to be considered for a special international study or thesis/dissertation research travel allowance, the Project Director must apply to HEP for a supplemental grant in accordance with instructions published in the solicitation. Postdoctoral Fellows are not eligible to receive the special international study or thesis/dissertation research travel allowance. Each application must include a "Proposal Cover Page" (Form NIFA-2002), "Project Summary" (Form NIFA-2003), "Budget" (Form NIFA-2004) and National Environmental Policy Act Exclusions Form (Form NIFA-2006).

(1) To provide HEP with sufficient information upon which to evaluate the merits of the requests for a special international study or thesis/dissertation research travel allowance, each application for a supplemental grant must contain a narrative which provides the following:

(i) The specific destination(s) and duration of the travel;

(ii) The specific study or thesis/dissertation research activities in which the Fellow will be engaged;

(iii) How the international experience will contribute to the Fellow's program of study;

(iv) A budget narrative specifying and justifying the dollar amount requested for the travel;

(v) Summary credentials of the faculty or other professionals with whom the Fellow will be working during the international experience (summary